Broadband service in rural areas

1057. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to extend support from the Universal Services Obligation Fund to operators offering Broadband Service in rural area;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of private companies that have expressed their willingness to offer broadband in rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. A proposal is under consideration of the Government to extend support from the Universal Service Obligation Fund for providing broadband connectivity in rural areas in a phased manner. Discussions with stakeholders (including private companies) are tinder way.

Statement of US Secretary of State

† 1058. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA: DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the statement given by US Secretary of State, recently, wherein she has refused to accept India as an atomic power;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction on the above Statement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) and (b) US Secretary of State Dr. Condoleezza Rice speaking before the House International Relations Committee and Senate Foreign Relations Committee on April 5,2006 said, "India is not and is not going to become a member of the NPT as a nuclear weapons State."

(c) India has no intention of joining the NPT and the question of being accepted as a nuclear weapon State of the NPT does not arise.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.